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GOVERNOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
LANSING



MICHAEL P. FLANAGAN
SUPERINTENDENT OF
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

MEMORANDUM

TO: All K-12 Michigan School Districts

FROM: Flora L. Jenkins, Director
Office of Professional Preparation Services

DATE: January 12, 2006

SUBJECT: Additional Clarification on Staffing Alternative Education Programs

On October 25, 2005 the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) issued a memorandum revising the procedures for the staffing of alternative education classrooms:

www.michigan.gov/documents/Revised_Procedures_for_Alternative_Ed_140182_7.doc

It has been brought to my attention that the revised procedures have adversely affected the employability status of elementary teachers who were already teaching in secondary alternative education self-contained classrooms (in accordance with the then existing MDE procedures for staffing alternative education classrooms) in which graduation credit is awarded. In order to provide additional clarification and to avoid the displacement of these teachers, the MDE has determined that elementary or secondary teachers who were assigned, prior to October 25, 2005 to teach core academic subjects in a self-contained classroom in which graduation credit is awarded are considered highly qualified under the following conditions:

- They have taken and passed the Michigan Test for Teacher Certification (MTTC) elementary education test prior to October 25, 2005. This includes those who sat for the October 16, 2005 test administration; **OR**
- If they hold any K-12, middle level, or grade 9 certificate endorsement they can then use the multi-subject portfolio

http://www.michigan.gov/documents/Alternative_Ed_NCLB_Clarifications_140240_7.doc

or any of the other High Objective Uniform State Standards of Evaluation (HOUSSE) options to demonstrate that they are highly qualified.

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Please note that teachers assigned to teach alternative education after October 25, 2005 must adhere to the "Revised Procedures for Staffing Alternative Education Programs". Local districts and schools are also reminded that an alternative education teacher assigned to teach core academic subjects in a departmentalized classroom must be appropriately certificated, endorsed and highly qualified. In addition, proposed legislation on new high school graduation requirements will result in the need for teachers who are highly qualified for each subject they teach. This may begin as early as 2006-07 pending passage of the legislation.

In addition, if the district is offering alternative education via online instructional programs such as NovaNET, PLATO, Keystone, or the Michigan Virtual High School's credit recovery program a certificated elementary or secondary teacher must be assigned to facilitate the instruction.

Teachers providing instructional programs to incarcerated youth may also be considered alternative education teachers. If the teacher is the primary provider of direct instruction in core academic subjects, then he or she must demonstrate competence using one of the State Board approved HOUSSE methods. If the teacher facilitates instruction following a lesson plan developed by the student's local district teacher, then he or she does not need to demonstrate competence as a highly qualified teacher.

I hope that the above information clarifies the issues concerning staffing of alternative education. If you have questions or need further assistance, please contact me at 517/373-6505 or email: jenkinsf@mi.gov or contact Dr. Frank Ciloski at 517/373-6791 or email: ciloskif@mi.gov.